

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 – 12 (canceled):

Claim 13 (currently amended): A method for rapid screening of parcels to identify parcels likely to contain particles of biological or non-biological contaminants, comprising the steps of:

~~cutting a corner of~~ opening each parcel;

~~shaking and compressing the parcels simultaneously thereby releasing any particles in or on the parcel;~~

~~creating an air flow over the parcels as the parcels are simultaneously shaken and compressed;~~

~~sampling particles in the air flow in real-time to detect whether the parcels are likely to include contaminants airflow contains either a high concentration of particles or particles with suspect characteristics;~~

~~collecting particles in the air flow with a particulate concentrator equipped with a filter; and~~

~~analyzing the filter periodically to provide a second-check of the accuracy of the sampling step;~~

~~wherein the filter is provided with a unique identifier corresponding to a group of parcels found to be non-suspect during the sampling step thereby permitting the non-suspect group of parcels to be identified and re-screened if particles of biological or non-biological contaminants are detected during the analyzing the filter step.~~

Claims 14-19 (canceled)

Claim 20 (previously presented): The method of claim 13, the sampling step comprising the step of utilizing predetermined characteristic signatures of particles.

Claim 21 (previously presented): The method of claim 20, the utilizing predetermined characteristic signatures of particles step comprising at least one of a threshold detection and a Multivariate Gaussian classifier.

Claims 22-24 (canceled)